000 that they would degenerate. For all that, they live contentedly and would certainly be happy if the Christian religion were to temper a little their barbarity and filth.

648 One asks why there are so few of them, given the multitudes of women. They reply that the Christians are to blame, because, as one of them told Father Raymond, the Spanish on two occasions massacred all the Caribs on the island of Saint Christopher, and once those of Guadeloupe, from which it is said only one woman escaped to the mountains with her children to people that region. The Spanish wanted to do the same at Dominica and massacred a good half of the
● [147] Caribs there. Since then the Caribs have been victims of smallpox, which they call variola, and of which several rotted and died, since they did not yet know a remedy for this disease. In short, they have been captured or killed by everybody: Flemish, English, Spanish, and the Allouagues, who are their enemies.

[49]

CHAPTER II

Their Language

191 The language of the Caribs is different from that of the Galibis of the mainland. It is difficult to learn for several reasons. The first is that they do not record it in writing or in any character. It therefore requires great patience in listening and close attention to distinguish their words, which they spout out rapidly, and also a great memory to retain what one has been able to gather. The second is
[198] that they have several sorts of languages. The men have theirs and the women theirs, and there is still another for harangues and important speeches that even the young people do not understand well. The third is that they have no words at all to express the powers of the soul, such as the will, the understanding, nor any words for what concerns religion or politeness. They have no term of honor such as 'Our Father.' They express, however, several acts of the understanding and of the will, such as to remember and to wish. In other things the tongue is copious and rather pretty. They sometimes sing their songs in a tone which is not agreeable and is very simple. They sing whatever occurs to them without rhyme and very often without reason, especially against their enemies.

CHAPTER XII

Their Diseases, Death, Mourning, Burial, and Fancies Concerning The Soul

164 757 Nearly all the Caribs have that disease called the sickness of Naples, or as others say, yaws, which is scarcely any better. The disease is fairly common among the Negroes, and some of the French also suffer from it. It is not, however, at least not always, the responsibility of Venus, since even small children have it. To cure themselves, they do not try sweating at all, but grate shellfish, which they swallow with water. They rub themselves with genipa, or with reed leaves burned with liana, which they call mouchao or miby. They do not get well as soon as patients who are made to sweat.

165 One sees very few other diseases among them, and it is a marvel that living such a mean life they are so healthy and fat and live so long. For it is certain that they usually live very long. It was only four or five months ago that the father of The Baron died, and his wife, The Baron's mother, still lives. The Baron, whose wife is still living, has a daughter; this daughter has a daughter and this latter already has children. So The Baron is a great-grandfather and his mother is a great-great grandmother [727] and The Baron's daughter, who is a grandmother herself, still has her own grandmother. And this is not the only example to be cited. Their long life must be attributed to their lack of cares.

751 They blame their demon for their diseases and if the illness is long and severe they call the boï'ayko to consult him about it. They 758 have a number of remedies which the women apply to the sick, but they treat the sick no more delicately than they do the healthy.

Relatives rarely or never visit their sick kin. Generally married [784] people do not visit the sick, because, they say, their bodies emit a force which afflicts the sick even more. That is why when one of The Baron's sons was ill, neither his brother, his sisters, nor his father went to see him; only his mother treated him and she did not communicate at all with his father.

727 When some among them are killed in war, they do what they can to recover the bodies and bury them. Following is how they bury their dead.

757 them, and all the above mentioned remedies heal without steam
● [164] baths or mercury. Conversely, small pox which is very rare among them is very dangerous in the same way that the plague is for us in France. [478]

751 They believe that pains in the joints such as gout are caused by
755 the boyes of South America and their gods. [426] They use a light-colored green stone as a remedy for kidney stones, to help women give birth, and for epilepsy. The women hang them around their neck like one of the most precious of their jewels. They receive them from the men who bring them from South America. There are also
757 imitation green stones which have no value. [445] The riboúlichi
[814] is a true rush if one of its roots is crushed and absorbed in some liquor by a woman in childbirth;it makes the delivery easy, but if too much is taken the child will be harmed as has been actually seen. [439]
[164] Ophthalmia is a common disease among the Caribs which appears almost every year, and is spread in the islands inhabited by the Caribs. It causes a fair number among them to be one-eyed. During the first five or six years this evil did not seem to approach the French, but now it makes its violence felt too often. [397] The Caribs purge themselves only when they are extremely sick. However, they only eat crabs, Lambis, bugaus, and some other poor nourishment which causes many boils. They pierce some boils with a ray's tail and squeeze the others to empty them. If the pus is such that it will not come out they take a hair which they dip into it and empty it. [340]
757 The chiboulelême is a common weed which the Caribs boil in water.
278 They then use the broth to relieve themselves from constipation. [147] The Caribs shred the skin of the palm Christi and make a compress for the forehead as a remedy for headache. They heat the leaf and rub the afflicted part with it and receive relief. [25] Balium is a herb with a stench used as remedy against fever. [171]

752 When the Caribs rid themselves of chiggers they make a small cut with a fish bone or a sharp little splinter and press them between their nails and make them leave. They also use shark oil or porpoise oil to make them leave or urucu mixed with oil of couàheu. [148]

757 Herbs which cure the wounds made by poison arrows are called
[278] couàla. [475] To cure arrow wounds they use a palma Christi leaf which they warm on the fire and rub on the wound. According to Captain Baron one of his hosts had been hit in the heel by a poisoned

627 I heard it was said to Mr. de Parquet that two Caribs were fighting a duel, shooting arrows at each other. During the time it takes to say the 51st Psalm, they were in continual movement, and to avoid each other's arrows they remained at a distance from each other. When they were forced to separate it was found that they had done no harm to one other.

Enough has now been said concerning warfare among the Caribs.

11. Disease, Death, and Funerals

●164 There is no rule so general that it allows no exception. In the first part of this chapter I described the robust physical condition of the Caribs. It should not be inferred from these remarks that European diseases are rare among them. More precisely, it should be said that the Caribs suffer from these diseases less frequently than we do in Europe. This is fortunate for them, for if they recover from their diseases this is due more to the powerful efforts of nature than to the remedies and treatment they receive.

757 It is certain that they have very excellent remedies. But if a remedy is very successful for one disease they may use if for all other sicknesses; they do not know the causes of sickness nor the qualities of their herbs, which often do them more harm than good. As far as good treatment is concerned, they do not know what it is to coddle the sick, and even those who are about to die are fed as if they were completely well. They especially fear smallpox because they have no treatment for it, and it often ravages them in the same way that the plague does in Europe. Very few among them bear its scars because most of them die of it. In the wet season they suffer from fevers which they cure by an external remedy; on the wrist and forehead they place some cachima [cachimilla?] leaves and other herbs crushed together. They also use a shred of pimento, as we have said, which they rub and pass over the eyes to make the fever pass away. They are also tormented at all times of the year by an eye sickness which I shall describe in my next chapter, because the French are also afflicted by it. This disease is communicable not only from family to family but even from island to island.

224 If fish forms such a large part of the diet of the Caribs, it is because boating and fishing have always been a favorite occupation for
396 them. The canoes which they still use today are hollowed out from the trunks of large trees, particularly the gum-tree, the giant of the forest. The word canoe is, moreover, like the word hammock, a word of Carib origin, imported into Europe by the Spanish. These
502 boats are today used only for fishing, but formerly the Caribs—who
805 are excellent seamen and even have, according to certain writers,
821 some notion of the stars and know how to calculate time and the seasons—ventured quite far out to sea and went easily from one
481 island to another. They were, besides, admirable swimmers, righting their canoes when they capsized, while the women kept afloat in the water, carrying their children at their breasts.

411 Their weapons for hunting and war were formerly bows and arrows, with tips carved from fish bones or tortoise-shell and often poisoned with the juice of certain plants. Of an unequalled skill from childhood in handling bows and arrows, the Caribs quickly became as adept at using guns when they were given them. The club, called bouton or boutou was also a powerful weapon in their hands. It was often carved and the hatchings were painted in various colors. As for the war hatchets of polished stone, found in the excavations on Dominica /140/ and other islands, they seem rather to have belonged to the Tainos than to the Carib (1). These hatchets bear a

1. Beuchat (H.) Manuel d'archeologie americaine /Manual of American Archeology/. Paris, 1912.

great resemblance to those found in the Guianas and in northern Brazil; there is a fine collection of them in the Museum of Roseau.

532 The arts seem to have been very little developed among the
212 Caribs of the Antilles, but some crude drawings or petroglyphs found on the rocks in the islands which they inhabited have been attributed to them, particularly in the vicinity of the town of Trois Rivieres, in Guadeloupe, and in the island of St. John.

515 Of naturally cleanly habits the Caribs bathed every day in the sea or in the rivers before staining their bodies with roucou. They have retained the habit of taking frequent baths and this hygienic
1044 care has protected them from a great number of illnesses; yaws, which is very common among the blacks of the Antilles, is rare in the Carib population.

164

[For information on diseases and infirmities which is incidental to a description of medicines used for their treatment, see category 278]

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

The acid fruit of this species is edible and refreshing but is apparently only known and used locally by Carib hunters.

Specimen citation: 3357.

Pitcairnia gracilis Mez in DeCandolle, Monogr. Phan. 9: 407. 1896.

Batard La Pite.

A Lesser Antillean species found in Dominica on rocky semi-wooded spots at lower to middle elevations.

The fine, fluffy, white scales which cover the lower surfaces of the grass-like leaves are mixed with honey and used by the Carib as a remedy for the common infant's mouth disease called « thrush ». The same mixture is employed at birth as a healing agent on the cut umbilical cord. The plant itself is carried when travelling as a good luck « chance ».

Specimen citation: 1240, 3054, 3496.

Pitcairnia spicata (Lamarck) Mez var. **sulphurea** (Andrews) Mez in DeCandolle, Monogr. Phan. 9: 393. 1896.

Pitcairnia sulphurea Andrews Bot. Repos. 4 (1802) pl. 249.

Batard La Pite.

A species of basaltic outcrops at the summits of mountain peaks of Dominica and St. Vincent.

The leaves of this species are also utilized by the Caribs in the manner discussed under *Pitcairnia gracilis*.

Specimen citation: 319, 1950.

LILIACEAE. Lily Family.

Smilax guianensis Vitman, Summ. Plant. 5: 422. 1791.

Smilax macrophylla Willdenow, Sp. Pl. ed. 4, 2: 786. 1806.

Bamboche.

A strong vine of the Lesser Antilles.

Caribs employ the withe-like stems in the making of snares, while an infusion of the roots in cold water is believed to be a cure for gonorrhoea.

Specimen citation: 3269.

13: Hodge & Taylor N, E-5 (1930-1956) 1957
ST13 Callinago ST13

814x

Ipomoea spp.
pútuku

Several wild twining species of *Ipomoea* (other than *I. pes-caprae*) are to be found in Dominica.

Leaves of certain species are employed by the Caribs to rub the body when bathing, and their use is considered to bring health and luck to the user (see *Eryngium foetidum*).

Specimen citation: 3318, 3323.

[515 777]

BORAGINACEAE. Borage Family.

Bourreria succulenta Jacquin, Enum. 14. 1760.
Tawai, Taway. — *tauái.*

A small tree of the West Indies and common in Dominica at lower elevations.

From the inner bark of this species is obtained an emollient fluid which the Indians often use to soothe inflamed eyes, a disease from which they frequently suffer. The wood burns easily and so the Caribs sometimes use it for torches [50].

Specimen citation: 17 (T).

[278 164 373]

Cordia reticulata Vahl, Eclog. Am. 3: 5. 1807.
Coco Poule.

A medium-sized tree of the Lesser Antilles and Venezuela and common in Dominica at lower and middle elevations.

The leaves of coco poule are believed to relieve headache. When used for headache they are placed on the forehead of the suffering Carib.

Specimen citation: 3359.

[278]

Tournefortia bicolor Swartz, Prodr. 40. 1788.
Mirette.

This species occurs throughout tropical America.

---

[50] Because of this use the tree has sometimes been called bois chandelle, but should not be confused with *Erithalis fruticosa*, the true Carib bois chandelle.